

REMARKS

Claims 1-48 are pending in the present application. During a telephone conversation between the Examiner and Dale C. Barr, Esq. on October 12, 2005, a Restriction Requirement was proposed. During this telephone conversation, a provisional election was made with traverse to prosecute the invention of Group I, claims 1-29. Applicants herein affirm the foregoing election. Accordingly, claims 1-29 are subject to examination.

In the Office Action dated October 31, 2005, the Examiner rejected claims 1, 2, 4, 5 and 9-12 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,156,538 to Roberts ("Roberts"). The Examiner further rejected claims 1, 4, 5, 7, 8 and 10-12 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 3,104,321 to Smith ("Smith"). Claims 1-8, 10-12, 15-17, 21-25 and 28 are further rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,107,008 to Howell, *et al.* ("Howell"). Claims 15-24, 27 and 29 are also rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as anticipated by Hanna, *et al.* ("Hanna"). Claim 26 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over the Howell reference in view of the Roberts reference. The Examiner also cites various deficiencies in the written specification that require correction. Applicants disagree with the stated grounds of rejection based upon the cited art and desire to further clarify various distinctions of the applicant's invention over the prior art. Reconsideration of the present application is therefore requested in light of the present amendment and following remarks.

The disclosed embodiments of the invention will now be discussed in comparison to the prior art. It is understood, however, that the discussion of the disclosed embodiments, as well as the discussion of the differences between the disclosed embodiments of the present invention and the prior art do not define the scope or interpretation of any of the claims. Instead, such discussed differences, when presented, are offered merely to help the Examiner appreciate important claim distinctions as they are discussed.

The Examiner has cited the Roberts reference for disclosing a method of forming plastic book covers that uses a radiation source to selectively irradiate portions of the book covers so

that the selected polymeric portions may be cross-linked to attain a desired material property. For example, the cover portions of the book cover may be subjected to unobstructed radiation from the radiation source, so that these regions may be relatively fully cross-linked to form relatively still cover portions, while hinge portions located on a selected edge of the cover is selectively masked to limit the exposure of the hinge portion to the radiation source, so that the hinge portion becomes relatively flexible (col. 3, lines 1-29). Roberts fails to disclose that the book covers are formed using selective layer sintering (SLS) and fused deposition modeling (FDM).

The Examiner has also cited the Smith reference. Smith discloses an apparatus for irradiating plastic tubular members, such as a polymeric insulation layer on an electrical conductor. Smith does not disclose selectively radiating portions of the tubular members. Instead, Smith is directed to uniform irradiation of the tubular member (col. 1, lines 65-70, *inter-alia*). Furthermore, Smith fails to disclose the use of SLS and FDM to form the tubular members.

The Howell reference is cited for disclosing a method for post curing objects produced using a stereolithographic process. Howell is similarly directed to the uniform irradiation of a polymeric object, and further fails to disclose the use of SLS and FDM to form the polymeric object.

The Hanna reference is cited for disclosing a method for selectively treating objects produced using a stereolithographic process. Hanna similarly fails to disclose the use of SLS and FDM to form the polymeric object.

Turning now to the claims, differences between the exact claim language and the applied art will be specifically pointed out. Claim 1, as amended, recite in pertinent part: "A method for changing a property of a layer-formed plastic part comprised of at least one plastic material, the method comprising...*forming the layer-formed plastic part using at least one of selective laser sintering (SLS) and fused deposition modeling (FDM)...*" (Emphasis added). The applied

references do not disclose or fairly suggest this. Accordingly, claim 1 is allowable over the cited art. Claims depending from claim 1 are also allowable based upon the allowability of the base claim and further in view of the additional limitations recited in the dependent claims. Claim 3 is cancelled without prejudice.

Claim 15, as amended, recites in pertinent part, “A method for producing a layer-formed plastic part comprised of at least one plastic material, the method comprising...forming at least one layer of a layer-formed plastic part, *wherein the layer-formed plastic part is formed using at least one of selective laser sintering (SLS) and fused deposition modeling (FDM)...*” (Emphasis added). Again, the applied references simply do not disclose or fairly suggest this. Accordingly, claim 15 is allowable over the cited art. Claims depending from claim 15 are also allowable based upon the allowability of the base claim and further in view of the additional limitations recited in the dependent claims. Claim 17 is cancelled without prejudice.

With reference now to the Examiner’s rejection of claim 26 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a), Applicants respectfully submit that the foregoing amendment to claim 15 fully addresses this rejection. With reference also to the examiner’s objections to the written specification, the Applicants respectfully submit that the amendment to the specification fully addresses the Examiner’s objection.

For the foregoing reasons, applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections based upon the prior art, and further respectfully requests a Notice of Allowance. If there are any remaining matters that may be handled by telephone conference, the Examiner is kindly invited to call the undersigned at his convenience.

Respectfully submitted,

BLACK LOWE & GRAHAM^{PLLC}



Steven H. Arterberry

Registration No.: 46,314

Direct Dial: 206.957.2483

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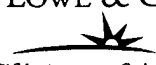
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BLACK LOWE & GRAHAM^{PLLC}


701 Fifth Avenue, Suite 4800
Seattle, Washington 98104
206.381.3300 • F: 206.381.3301